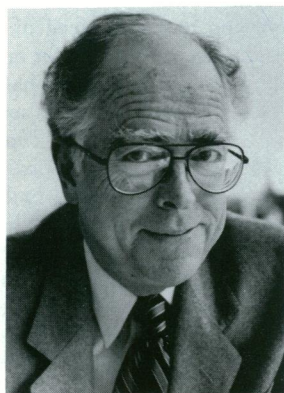


Casida's research serves as the basis for evaluating the benefits and risks of established pesticides and for the rational design and use of safer and more effective replacements. Casida pioneered research on almost all the major insecticides and synergists and is responsible directly or indirectly for much of the basic knowledge on their mode of action and metabolism. Casida has published about 530 papers and obtained 26 patents; his discoveries span much of the history of organic pesticides and account for several of the fundamental breakthroughs in the fields of entomology, neurobiology, toxicology, and biochemistry. In addition to his extensive research accomplishments, Casida is recognized as an inspiring teacher, and many of his students and postdoctoral fellows have become leading figures in pesticide science.

"Since the beginnings of NIEHS, research involving pesticides and other agricultural chemicals has been an important part of the institute's mission and extramural portfolio. Dr. Casida's grant was among the original ones supported by NIEHS and has continued to yield significant new information that is important in designing pesticides that are effective on the target organism but are safe for humans," said Anne P. Sassaman, director of the NIEHS Division of Extramural Research and Training.

The Wolf Foundation was established by inventor, philanthropist, and diplomat Ricardo Wolf to promote science and art. The first prizes were awarded in 1978. To date, 145 laureates from 18 countries have been honored with the prize, which consists of a diploma and \$100,000 in each category; Casida is this year's sole recipient for Agriculture.



**John E. Casida**, recipient of the Wolf Prize

August.

## Maternal Smoking Associated with Preterm Delivery and Infant Death

"Cigarette packages warn that smoking by pregnant women may result in low birth weight. What they should say is that smoking in pregnancy may cause preterm delivery and infant death," says Allen J. Wilcox, chief of the epidemiology branch at NIEHS. Wilcox is the author of a study on maternal smoking published in June in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* (vol. 137, no. 10).

Women who smoke are known to have higher rates of infant mortality. However, public health experts have usually emphasized the lower birth weight of infants born to smokers. Wilcox applied a new analytic method to data from nearly 260,000 births in Missouri and found that smokers are at higher risk of delivering small preterm infants, and these infants have higher death rates at every birth weight. It has not been generally recognized that the mortality risk of smokers' infants are independent of low birth weight.

Wilcox used data from Colorado to show that high altitude reduces fetal growth in a similar way, but without any apparent harm to the baby. Colorado babies tend to be lighter than babies born at lower alti-

tudes, but their survival is just as good as those born at lower altitudes. "We keep focusing on the smaller birth weights of babies born to smokers. But the example of altitude suggests that smaller weights are not the issue," Wilcox says. "We should make sure that women know the real risk of smoking: they might lose their baby."

## Indoor Allergens Endanger Health

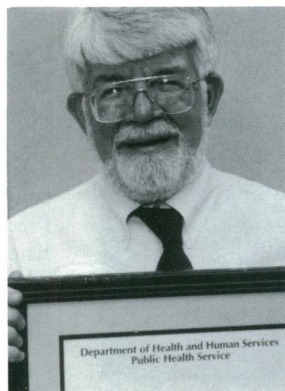
NIEHS was among five federal agencies sponsoring a committee study and report from the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine titled *Indoor Allergens: Assessing and Controlling Adverse Health Effects*. The report concludes that indoor allergens endanger health and can increase medical care costs to such an extent that comprehensive and systematic efforts are needed for better monitoring and control.

"Allergens play a key role in triggering some cases of asthma, and treatment for asthma-related illnesses costs more than \$6 billion a year," said committee chair Roy Patterson, Ernest S. Bazley professor of medicine and chief of the division of allergy-immunology at Northwestern University Medical School. Most Americans spend more than 90% of their time inside. One in five Americans will experience allergy-related illness at some time during their lives.

Other sponsors of the report were U.S. EPA, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Copies of the report may be obtained from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Avenue N.W., Washington, DC 20418 USA; the cost of the report is \$39.95 (prepaid) plus \$4 shipping for the first copy and \$0.50 for each additional copy. A five-page press release summarizing the report is available from the NAS at no cost by calling (202) 334-2138.

## Millar Steps Down, Henney Elected

J. Donald Millar, former director of the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, stepped down in June after four years as the Chairman of the National Toxicology Program Executive Committee. The executive committee provides primary program oversight to the NTP and is composed of the heads of federal health research and regulatory agencies. The committee serves as the NTP's major advisory group on research and testing needs, selection and priority setting for



**J. Donald Millar**, former NTP Executive Committee Chair

FDA



**Jane E. Henney**, new NTP Executive Committee Chair

## NIEHS Requests Applications for Development of Educational Material

As the first component of a proposed comprehensive NIEHS environmental health sciences education program, the institute has requested grant applications for the development of educational materials related to environmental health sciences in grades K-12. The request for applications is an outgrowth of a national forum on environmental health sciences education held at NIEHS in December 1992. The forum brought together educators, scientists, and